



STATUS OF SCHEDULED TRIBE POPULATION IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

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ABSTRACT

Some segments of society have remained illiterate and backward for many centuries. It was because of the fact that Indian society was divided into "Varnas" and few people of the high caste enjoyed all the privileges and facilities at the expense of society's underprivileged people. That is why our constitutional frameworks have seriously considered giving that section of society reservations so that they can also reach the optimum level in society. Much still has to be done, however, in this direction. But during the process of balancing the various sections of society, the government must be very careful not to hurt and disturb other sections of society. According to the recent judgement of the Supreme Court, those who have already benefited from reservations should not be granted benefits over and over again. Only those individuals, regardless of caste, creed and colour, who are economically poor and depressed, should be helped. This paper presents a conceptual structure focused on the seamless integration of culture and diversity throughout the different stages of tribal population education.

KEYWORDS: Education, Schedule tribe, Himachal Pradesh.

INTRODUCTION:

The basic fundamental right secured under Article 14 of the Constitution is equality before the law. But a double edged sword is the concept of equality. It puts the strong and the disabled on the same basis in the race of life. It is a social justice dictum that there is only equality among equals. To treat inequality as equals is to perpetuate inequality. The humanity of a society is determined by the degree of protection it offers to its members who are weaker, disabled and less gifted. 'Equality of opportunity and 'fair treatment' sets the poor and the wealthy at par and to that extent; it is a rejection of social justice. It is in truth, 'equality of outcomes' that is the acid test of the democratic pretensions of society. In a highly unequal society like ours, it is only by giving the under-privileged part of society special security and privileges that we can allow the poor to resist exploitation by the powerful. It was because of these reasons that the creator of our Constitution made explicit provisions to secure the tribal community's interests.

Scheduled Tribes:

The term 'Tribe' has no accurate meaning. 'Adim Jati' is the Hindi version of the word tribe. "The term tribe is defined by the Anthro dictionary as a social community, typically with a definite region, dialect, culture, homogeneity and unifying social organisation." On the other hand, social scientists describe the word Tribe as a simple social community, members who speak a similar dialect, have a single government and act for war purposes together.

The word tribe or tribal is not specified anywhere in the constitution, while scheduled tribes serve the tribe or tribal groups notified by the president in compliance with Article 342. Tribes are not part of the conventional system of Hindu castes. Scheduled tribes in India are in other parts of the world more like the 'indigenous' or 'native people.' STs are described by Mishra (2002) as people who

- (i) To pretend to be indigenous to the soil;
- (ii) Occupy the woodland and hilly regions generally;
- (iii) Primarily follow an economy at the subsistence level;
- (iv) Take full note of traditional religious and cultural practises;
- (v) Believe in common ancestors and in common ancestry
- (vi) Have good community relations. Nevertheless, not all traits extend to all tribal cultures.

Traditionally considered characteristics of the tribal people:

- The tribal people live in the rather inaccessible parts of the country.
- The tribal people live away from the civilized world.
- They belong to races like Australoid, Mongoloids and Negrito.
- They speak tribal dialect
- They believe in ghosts and spirits and worship them.

- They profess primitive religion known as Animism
- Their chief occupations are gathering forest products, hunting etc.
- They are, by and large, meat eaters.

Scheduled Tribes in Himachal Pradesh:

Out of the total geographical area of 55,673 square kilometres of Himachal Pradesh, approximately 23,655 square kilometres of area fall under Schedule V, representing 42.49 percent of the total area of the state. 1, 73,661 of the total population living in the Scheduled Area are 1, 23,585 tribals, which make up almost 71.16 percent of the total population living in this area. According to the 2011 Socio Economic Caste Census, among Scheduled Tribe (ST) households in rural areas of India, the Himachal Pradesh tribals are better off. Nearly 21.37% of rural ST households have an income of more than Rs. 10,000 per month and 42.76% of irrigated agricultural land is owned by tribal households. With 23.72 percent of such households with at least one member in a government job, HP tribals are ahead of other states among salaried government workers too.

The population of Himachal Pradesh is 6864602, according to the 2011 Census, of which 392126 (5.71 per cent) belong to the Scheduled Tribes. In the State Scheduled Tribes lists, the following groups have been identified. Apart from some other smaller groups of tribes such as Bhot/ Bodh, Beda, Jad/ Lamba/ Khampa, and Swangla, these are a) Gaddis, b) Gujjars, c) Kinnara or Kinnaurs, d) Lahaulas and e) Pangwalas. In the upper and middle levels of the hills, the Himachal tribes typically have their houses. Many of the HP tribal groups are thought to have migrated from time to time from the plains and adjoining areas.

Table 1. Tribal Population of Himachal Pradesh (District wise)

Name of District	Total Population	Scheduled Tribe Population	Percentage
1. Bilaspur	381956	10693	2.80
2. Chamba	519080	135500	26.10
3. Hamirpur	454768	3044	0.67
4. Kangra	1510075	84564	5.60
5. Kinnaur	84121	48746	57.94
6. Kullu	437903	16822	3.84
7. Lahaul- Spiti	31564	25707	81.44
8. Mandi	999777	12787	1.28
9. Shimla	814010	8755	1.07
10. Sirmour	529855	11262	2.12
11. Solan	580320	25645	4.42
12. Una	521173	8601	1.65
Total	6864602	392126	5.71

Source: Census – 2011, Tribal Development Department, Govt. Of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla

Education:

In 2011, with a male literacy rate of 89% and a female literacy rate of 75%, the overall literacy rate was around 82 percent. The percentage of literacy among the Scheduled Tribes has risen from 65.5% in 2001 to 73.64% in 2011. In 2011, the male literacy rate was 83.17% and the female literacy rate was 64.20%, which is still slightly below the state average and much lower than that of their male counterparts.

Table 2. Literacy Percentage of STs in Himachal Pradesh

District	Male	Female	Total
1. Bilaspur	84.6	66.0	75.5
2. Chamba	80.3	58.0	69.1
3. Hamirpur	92.6	78.2	85.4
4. Kangra	82.8	65.7	74.1
5. Kinnaur	89.2	71.5	80.0
6. Kullu	90.2	76.0	83.2
7. Lahul & Spiti	86.9	67.2	76.9
8. Mandi	83.8	68.2	75.9
9. Shimla	79.8	70.8	75.5
10. Sirmaur	69.7	48.7	59.7
11. Solan	82.5	63.0	73.1
12. Una	87.8	71.8	80.0
Total (HP)	83.2	64.2	73.6

Source: Census of India 2011

Constitutional, Legal and Institutional Safeguards:

The Constitution of India has made provisions for the Scheduled Tribes in the country, in view of the difficulties they face and the lack of access to development facilities in the geographic regions where they reside. A crucial protection is to support educational and economic interests and protect them from injustice and other forms of violence. (a) Article 14 shall refer to equal rights and opportunities; (b) Article 15 shall prohibit discrimination on grounds of sex, faith, race, caste, etc.; (c) Article 15(4) shall make special provisions for STs; (d) Article 16(3) shall allow States to make special provisions for reservations for appointments or roles in favour of STs; (e) Article 46: Promotion, with special care, of the educational and economic interests of STs, protection from social inequality and exploitation; (f) Article 275(1): Grant for the promotion of the targeted welfare of STs; (g) Article 330, 332, 335: Allocation of seats for STs in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies; and (h) Article 339, 340: Jurisdiction of the Union for the welfare of STs.

In the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989, HP Panchayat Raj Act, 1994, Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act, National Forest Policy 1988, etc., some important acts that ensure social safeguards for STs. The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, and The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes: (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules, 1995, are some of the acts that acknowledge and safeguard tribal interest in forests. Against land alienation, money lending, debt relief and bonded labour, etc., there are many security and anti-exploitative initiatives. In addition to these, except under some circumstances, the Himachal Pradesh Tenancy and Land Reform Act, 1972 placed an end to all forms of tenancy on tribal lands.

Scheduled Areas under Fifth Schedule of Constitution:

The provisions of the 'Fifth Schedule' are enshrined in the Constitution under Article 244(2) in order to protect the interests of the Scheduled tribes, which defines certain areas with a predominant tribal population that require special protection and measures for the conservation of their population and culture that provide for administrative arrangements and the Gram Sabha's consent to the implementation of the progressive development. These notified areas in HP are 3 Schedule V Districts (Fully & Partially covered), 2 Schedule V Districts (Fully covered) (Lahaul & Spiti, and Kinnaur), 1 Schedule V District (Partly covered) (Chamba), 7 Schedule V District Blocks, 151 Gram Panchayats in Schedule V Districts, and 806 Schedule V District Revenue Villages. The Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti districts, in their entirety, and the Chamba district sub-divisions of Pangi and Bharmour (now tehsil Bharmour and sub-tehsil Holi) constitute the Scheduled Areas in the State.

CONCLUSION:

In home settings, gross disparities result from discrepancies. Obviously, these inequalities are the most difficult to resolve, and success here basically depends on the general improvement of the population's standard of living. The progress of democracy depends on whether all parts of the population are educated. God created this wonderful world, and in the eyes of the Almighty, nobody is high or poor. Yet we have built a wedge between various parts of society. Therefore, eliminating all kinds of inequalities is very necessary.

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